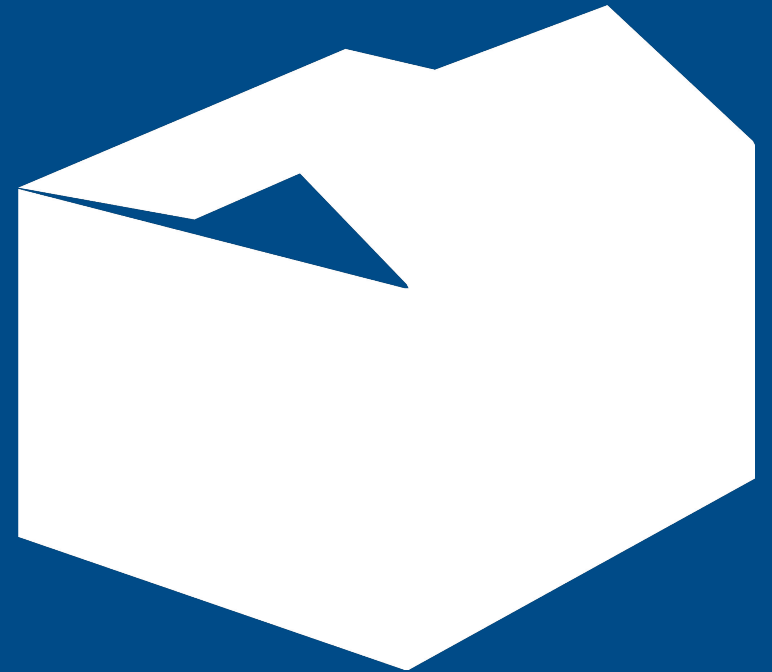


'Sorry we missed you'

How pressure on delivery drivers impacts
consumer outcomes for parcel delivery

**citizens
advice**



Summary

More than 9 in 10 of us have ordered at least 1 item online since the coronavirus pandemic began, while 1 in 2 receive parcels at least once a week. For those who struggle to access physical stores, for example due to a disability or because they live in a rural location, shopping online has become a lifeline.

Parcel delivery companies are a vital link in the e-retail chain. But Citizens Advice research has consistently shown that consumers frequently experience problems with parcel delivery, and struggle to get these issues resolved.

The problems consumers experience are often linked to delivery drivers. For example, consumers frequently report drivers not leaving them long enough to get to the door or leaving parcels in unsafe locations.

In this report, for the first time we take a closer look at the experience of delivery drivers, and how their working conditions contribute to the problems we see.

We find that although many delivery drivers enjoy their job, it's often highly pressurised. Drivers report high workloads, with insufficient time allocated to each delivery and penalties for running behind.

It would be easy to put these problems down to the actions of individual drivers, but our research points to a systemic problem. From the terms of employment to the pay and incentive structures, the way this part of the market functions is driving poor outcomes for consumers.

Stronger consumer protections are needed to reduce consumer harm in the parcels market. However, this must sit alongside action to ensure that drivers have realistic, manageable workloads and are incentivised to provide good customer service. Consumers value reliability over speed, and the market needs to adapt to deliver this.

Our recommendations:

1

Ofcom should explore using Essential Conditions to improve outcomes for consumers without increasing the pressure on delivery drivers

2

Ofcom should consider how to encourage the creation of a network of local, open-access Pick Up Drop Off points

3

The Government should consider widening the scope of the planned Single Enforcement Body

Research approach

Unless otherwise referenced the information in this report is based on the following original research.

Qualitative research

In October 2020, Collaborate Research carried out in-depth interviews with delivery drivers to understand how their working practices impact consumer outcomes.

Quantitative research

In April 2021 Savanta ComRes ran an online, nationally representative survey of 4,043 UK adults. This survey sought primarily to understand:

- What consumers value most when it comes to delivery
- The importance of parcel deliveries, and which groups disproportionately rely on them
- Issues with parcel delivery
- Consumer confidence in parcel delivery

Qualitative depth interviews

40 video or telephone depth interviews with delivery drivers across a range of employment models, demographics and locations

Interim task and re-interview

16 drivers who took part in the first round of interviews were asked to complete an ethnographic task over 2-3 days before being re-interviewed.

Sample breakdown:

Employment type: 12 directly employed, 15 self-employed and own or lease a van, 13 self-employed and use their own car

31 Full-time, 9 Part-time

Location: 18 Urban, 23 Suburban, 11 Rural

29 England, 6 Scotland, 5 Wales

Company: 12 Amazon, 8 Royal Mail, 7 Hermes, 6 Yodel, 5 DPD, 2 other

Gender, Ethnicity & Age: 31 Male, 9 Female

29 White, 11 BAME

23 under 40, 17 over 40

1. Consumer harm in the parcels market

Online shopping is now almost universal, with more and more consumers relying on e-retail to get the goods they need. And the coronavirus pandemic has only accelerated this trend. A third of all retail sales in the UK are now made online¹ and consumers receive an average of 8 parcels each month.²

But our research has consistently shown that consumers frequently experience problems with parcel delivery, and that these problems can be difficult to put right.

These issues appear to have eroded consumer confidence in the market and have left consumers with low expectations of service quality. This apathy may be the reason so few consumers complain when something goes wrong, depriving delivery companies and retailers from valuable feedback.

In this section we look at the problems consumers experience in the parcels market, and outline both the direct and indirect impacts of these issues.

In numbers:

1 in 2 consumers receive a parcel at least once a week

48%



1 in 4 consumers don't know how they would cope without parcel delivery

23%



1 in 5 consumers experience a delivery problem every week³

21%



1 in 5 consumers aren't confident that their deliveries will arrive on time

23%



Consumer problems with parcel delivery are widespread

Parcel delivery problems are widespread, and since the outbreak of coronavirus in March 2020 more consumers than ever are coming to us for help.

Our research has consistently identified the following delivery problems as some of the most frequently experienced:

- Parcels arriving late⁴
- Parcels left in insecure locations
- Parcels not delivered even when people are home⁵

Time-poor groups such as parents and carers, disabled people, and those with specific access needs are more reliant on parcel deliveries, but also experience more delivery problems.

These issues reflect the lack of security and reliability for consumers of parcel delivery services.

Problems with complaints:

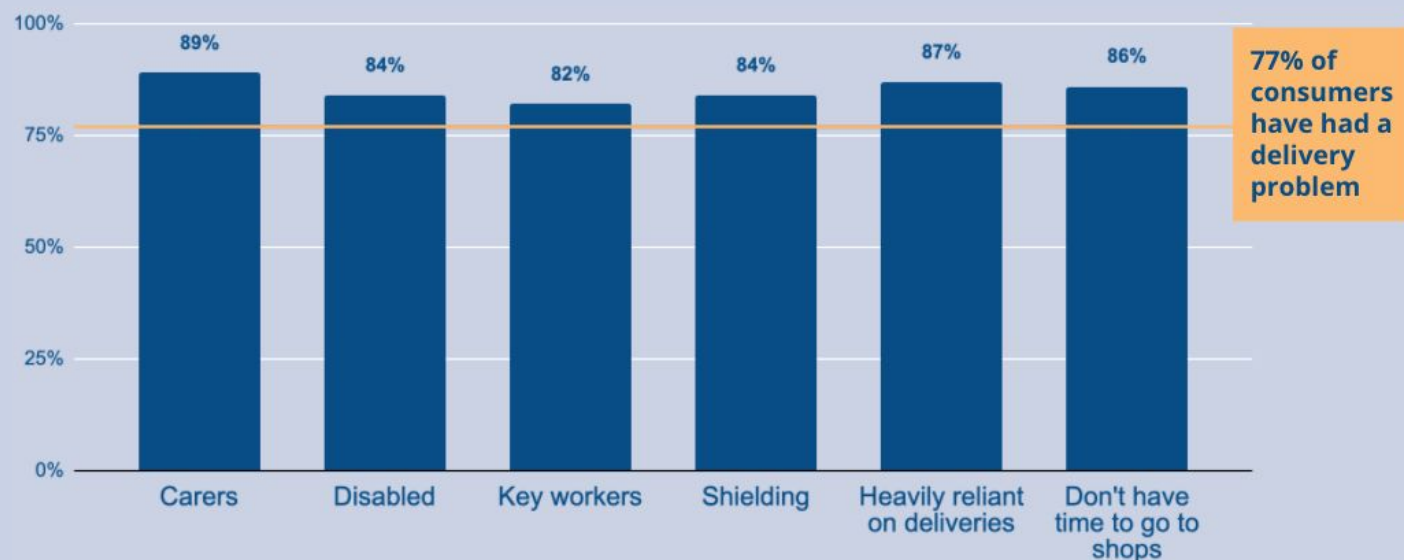
When consumers attempt to resolve issues with parcel deliveries, almost 9 in 10 (88%) have difficulty with the process.



Simone bought trousers online and paid for next day delivery. The parcel company left the order on Simone's doorstep, which was clearly visible to passersby. When Simone returned home, the trousers had gone missing and she assumed they had been stolen. Simone has reported the theft but has found it difficult to receive a refund or receive a re-delivery of the trousers.

- Citizens Advice consumer service case study, March 2021

Parcel delivery problems disproportionately impact certain groups:



Delivery problems have a range of impacts on consumers

When consumers experience problems with delivery the consequences of those problems can be broadly understood as:

- **Direct impacts** such as stress, loss of money and loss of time
- **Indirect impacts** which affect consumer expectations and relationships with the market.

Direct impacts:

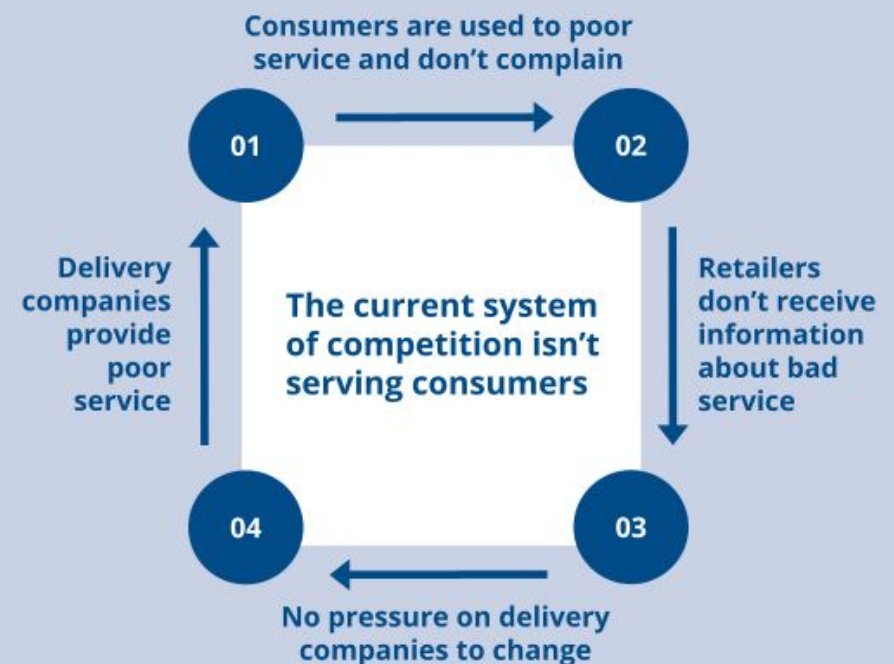
Our research has shown that 1 in 5 consumers experience stress and anxiety as a result of delivery problems, with 1 in 10 incurring financial loss.⁶

This is higher in the consumer consigned segment of the market where more than half of those who have issues lose money as a result.⁷

Indirect impacts:

The widespread nature of delivery problems also seems to be reducing consumers' expectations of the market. More than 1 in 5 consumers aren't confident about their deliveries arriving on time, and a similar proportion aren't confident their parcels will be left in a secure location. For time-poor and disabled consumers, this lack of confidence is even more pronounced, with over a quarter lacking confidence in the system.

In theory, consumers can complain directly to retailers or operators, which would work to drive up standards. But our research has found that the majority of people don't attempt to complain or resolve delivery problems due to this general lack of confidence.⁸ This disrupts the natural feedback mechanism which should drive up standards in the market, creating a vicious cycle of consumer resignation in which there isn't enough pressure for delivery companies to make changes.



2. Linking consumer harm to pressure on delivery drivers

Delivery drivers experience pressures throughout their day which can have a negative impact on consumer outcomes.

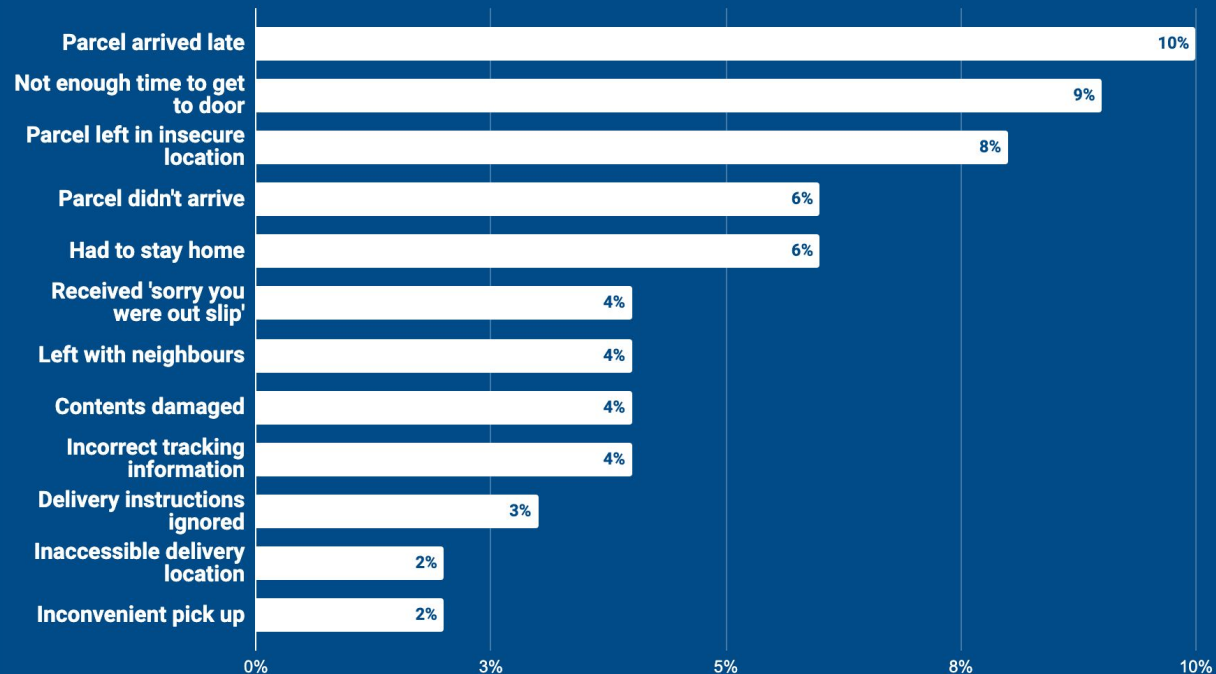
Many drivers we spoke to reported experiencing a large amount of pressure at work. High parcel loads and unforeseen events such as traffic or roadworks all have an impact on their ability to do their job well.

Our findings indicate that while drivers do their best to provide a good service many of the most common consumer parcel problems can be traced back to this daily pressure. Additionally, some payment structures appear to encourage drivers to employ sub-optimal practices so they don't lose out on income.

And while we also found evidence of good practice to support drivers experiencing delays or struggling with high workloads, this doesn't appear widespread enough to make a significant impact for either drivers, or consumers.

This section will examine the links between driver behaviour and consumer outcomes by examining commonly occurring issues of late parcels, drivers leaving before consumers can get to the door, and parcels left in insecure locations.

Parcel problems in a single week:⁹



In a single week:

6.8 million

consumers (13%) had a parcel delivery problem caused by a delivery driver¹⁰

3 in 5

of all parcel delivery problems (62%) were caused by a delivery driver¹¹

"The parcel arrived late"



1 in 4 consumers (27%) have had a parcel arrive late in the last 12 months¹²



2 in 3 (60%) consumers said they wouldn't be surprised if their parcel arrived late¹³

Late delivery is one of the most common issues that consumers face. Increasing numbers of fast delivery services, such as next-day delivery, have made late delivery more common.¹⁴

But our research found that consumers value reliability more highly than speed, and that many only use a next day service because it gives them certainty over when the parcel will arrive.

A quarter (23%) said that the delivery arriving when it's supposed to is the most important factor for them in parcel delivery. 15% identified low low price as the most important, while 6% selected same or next-day delivery.

A reliable delivery date is the most important feature of parcel delivery for almost 1 in 4 (23%) consumers, and 13% said they'd order more online if they knew which date their parcel would arrive on.

Drivers experience frequent delays

Drivers experience frequent delays along their journey. Problems further up the supply chain, traffic and finding parking can all cause delays, and these delays can build up throughout the day.



Drivers we spoke to said:

"Yesterday I was in traffic for 30 minutes and that ruined my whole day."

"We were asked to go to the depot to collect any missing parcels but when I arrived all the parcels still required sorting into rounds. [Sorting them] would've heavily delayed me so I left mine and will hopefully be able to deliver tomorrow. Any next day deliveries that we left have obviously not been delivered on time."

Some companies have a 'sweeper system' in which a driver is employed specifically to pick up and deliver parcels from drivers experiencing delays. But for the most part, there are no contingency plans to deal with the delays that drivers experience. This results in delays on the time and day that consumers receive their parcels.

"The driver left before I had time to come to the door"



In a single week almost 3 million consumers miss a parcel because they didn't have time to get to the door¹⁵



2 in 5 consumers (40%) have received a 'sorry you were out' card while they were at home¹⁶

Successful delivery requires the customer to be at home and also ready and able to open the door. Being able to arrive at the door at a moment's notice can be difficult for consumers, especially if they're disabled, have caring responsibilities, or are in a meeting whilst working from home. As a result, consumers often report that the driver left before they had time to come to the door, or that they received a 'sorry we missed you' slip even though they were in.

This can be a particular problem for disabled consumers, who may need longer to come to the door, but are unable to specify this.



"I miss 6 out of 10 deliveries, just because it's such a long process to get from here to downstairs to tell them that I'm here."
- Consumer quote¹⁷

Delivery drivers are rushed

Delivery drivers have high volumes of parcels to deliver each day and often encounter delays on the road. In addition, they're often given short time frames, such as 1 or 2 minutes to deliver each parcel. This means they're under pressure to move on to the next delivery and don't have time to wait for consumers to come to the door. If they're running out of time they'll either leave quickly, or leave a 'sorry we missed you' slip.

Drivers report trying to wait if there are signs that the consumer is elderly or disabled, such as ramps and handrails on the house. But for the most part they have no idea who is behind the door.



Drivers we spoke to said:

"Pressure means we're less patient."

"If customers don't answer the door straight away we have to run away. They could be chasing you down the road. You're in a hurry and you don't have time to think about the customer as your mind is racing on where you have to go next."

"The parcel was left in an insecure location"



1 in 3 consumers (30%) have had a parcel left in an insecure location



1 in 10 consumers have had a parcel lost or stolen in the last 12 months¹⁸

Parcels delivered to insecure locations, such as in full view on a doorstep or in a bin, are at risk of being lost, stolen or damaged. Many consumers, particularly those living in urban areas, don't have anywhere their parcel can be left safely. Just 33% of urban consumers say they have a safe space compared to 43% of rural consumers.¹⁹ This is worrying given the increase in 'porch piracy' - parcels being stolen from consumers' doorsteps.²⁰



Frances bought a present for her son's birthday online and requested it be left at her neighbour's house. The parcel was marked as delivered but was not at her address or with her neighbour. Frances contacted the retailer and delivery company to try to find the missing present but did not receive a refund and her son was left without the gift on his birthday.
- Citizens Advice consumer service case study, March 2021

For some drivers, undelivered parcels can impact pay

The ways in which drivers are paid can impact the actions they take when delivering parcels. Some drivers have part or all of their wages made up of 'pay-per-drop', meaning they only get paid for successful delivery. These payment structures encourage drivers to mark the parcel as successfully delivered at any cost, so that it doesn't impact their pay packet.



"[When I was paid only by successful delivery I] tried everything to deliver the parcel, storage boxes, sheds, neighbours. It was not always safe but you'd be tempted to leave it anyway."

For drivers paid a daily rate, an unsuccessful delivery may mean they have to take the parcels back to the depot for delivery to be attempted again the next day. This adds to their workload on their next shift, and the journey back adds time and fuel costs for which they receive no additional payment.

In addition, drivers may have to leave undelivered parcels in their vehicles (including personal vehicles where parcels may be in view) overnight because the depot has closed. Parcels left in insecure locations such as vans, cars, or on doorsteps are at greater risk of theft and damage.

3. Sources of delivery driver pressure

Delivery drivers experience many pressures throughout their day which can have a negative impact on consumer outcomes.

Drivers are the final link in an imperfect supply chain, which means factors outside of their control can impact their ability to successfully deliver parcels to consumers.

High workloads and unpredictable working days can also make delivering for consumers difficult. Many drivers have no support when things go wrong which can lead to them struggling to deliver parcels to consumers on time.

And these difficulties are sometimes made worse by employment conditions. Some drivers have contracts which mean their rates of pay vary from week to week, and that taking time off can be difficult. This can increase the pressure they feel, and indirectly encourage the use of sub-optimal practices such as leaving parcels in insecure locations.

This section will examine some of the causes of the pressure drivers face, and illustrate the impacts they have directly on drivers, and indirectly on consumers.

Problems along the parcel delivery journey increase the pressure drivers face



Delivery drivers are the final link in a complex and imperfect supply chain

Delivery drivers are the last link in a complex and imperfect supply chain. As a result, they're under immense pressure to fulfill the promises made by retailers to consumers.

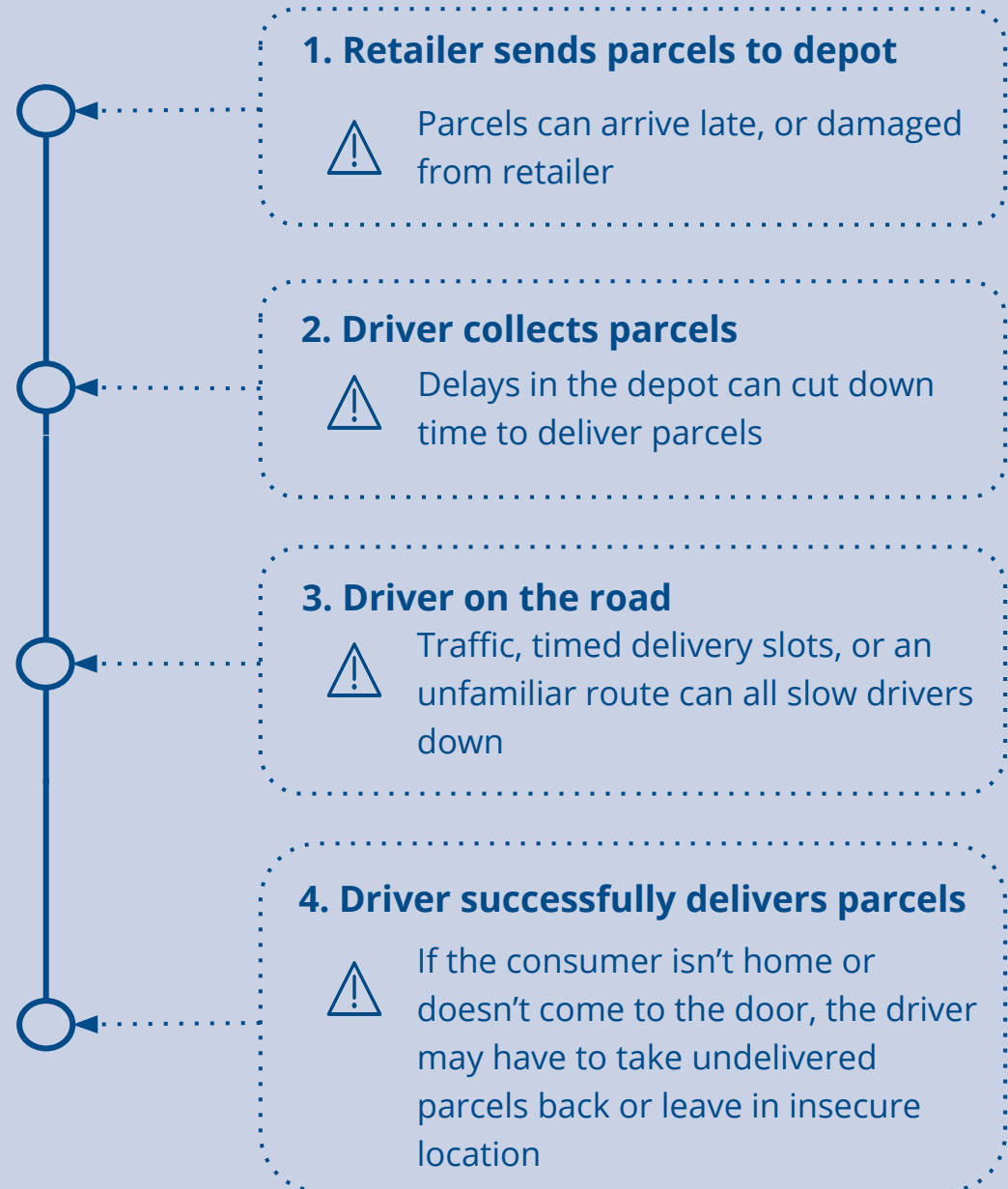
But factors they have little or no control of further up the supply chain and along their journey, such as parcels arriving late at the depot, traffic and parking restrictions, can impact on their ability to deliver parcels.

And as the main interface that customers have with the retailer and the parcel company, they are often on the receiving end of customer frustrations. Problems before the parcel gets to the depot, along the journey and with the customer all end up as the driver's responsibility.



Drivers we spoke to said:

- *"If the parcels come in late, you're going to be late delivering them."*
- *"All of the risk is on the driver's shoulders."*
- *"People get furious that you don't have their parcel."*



Delivery drivers have high targets and struggle with large volumes of parcels to deliver

The majority of drivers we spoke to said that the number of parcels they're expected to deliver each day is high, and that they often struggle to meet the targets set for them.



"You're always in a rush, you have a 1 hour window and I have a 1 min 20 stop time to stop the van, get out the package, go to the door and get back in the van. The quicker you finish the quicker you can go home. So you knock and press the bell but you can't wait because you'll get behind time."

2 respondents separately invoked the heroic effort needed to meet targets:



"I've wondered how they work these out because they're so unrealistic. I'm not wonder woman."

"It's all top secret how they work it out but it must be superman that it's based on."

Timed deliveries, such as next day delivery or items that are required to be delivered before 12, also build up pressure for drivers. Timed and next day deliveries are a higher value product and are therefore often given priority over other parcels in a driver's load.



"Had a call from [company] to change my route ...one customer has paid special delivery so this is the most important parcel to get delivered. The non paying delivery customers were not able to have their parcels delivered as I ran out of time that day due to the change."

In combination with a high volume of deliveries, they lead to drivers perpetually rushing in order to deliver within specific time slots.



"The schedule goes out of the window. Slots customers select can mean you have to break off your scheduled route to do one delivery. If you get too many of them, it gets stressful and you start to fail [to meet your other targets]."

There is a lack of contingency planning for when things go wrong

Problems on the road occur regularly. However, many drivers report having no support to deal with them and no time built into their day to account for setbacks. This means they have a knock on effect on the rest of the day.



James left the depot an hour late after problems with technology meant he couldn't scan and load his parcels. This late start meant he hit traffic, and new parking and driving restrictions in the city centre.

- Delivery driver case study



"My car broke down between villages with the parcels already loaded. I needed to wait for the depot to send another driver to pick them up. I lost earnings for the day and the customers didn't all get their parcels because they took 3 hours for [company] to come for them."

In addition, there is no time built in to find the address, find parking or wait for consumers to come to the door. There is no consideration to the geography of routes. Distances are longer between drops in rural areas but this is not taken into account.



"At the start of the shift we get a long list of drops and we collect the parcels from the warehouse. We're told we need to complete them by a certain time and this doesn't take into account traffic or rest breaks."

There are some examples of good practice. One driver reported that his company uses a 'sweeper', a driver employed specifically to collect and re-deliver parcels from other drivers experiencing delays. But for the most part, the stress and pressure are felt solely by the driver.



There are a lack of local, secure delivery locations

If a consumer isn't at home, or can't come to the door drivers have a choice over whether to take the parcel back or to attempt delivery to a safe space or neighbour. This can be a difficult decision for drivers to make. If they are paid per successful delivery, taking a parcel back means receiving no pay. But leaving parcels in insecure locations puts parcels at risk of theft and can lead to complaints.



Drivers we spoke to said:

- "You're in trouble both ways. You aren't supposed to take it back but you're also not supposed to leave it somewhere unsafe. You can't win."*
- "A lot of it is down to luck. As long as the customer doesn't ring to complain."*
- "Had to keep 5 parcels in my vehicle overnight due to [the] depot being shut at 8pm. Customers were not in during the day and I had no time to take them back to the depot before the end of my shift. I was anxious and nervous because if my van gets broken into I would be liable for the packages and would not be compensated."*

Pick Up Drop Off (PUDO) points such as lockers and convenience stores are one solution to this issue. The ability to leave failed first time deliveries at a local PUDO reduces the incentive to leave parcels in insecure locations and guarantees income. They can also provide peace of mind to consumers who know that if they are away, their parcels are being kept safe in an easily accessible location.

Some drivers already have the option of delivering parcels to PUDOs if consumers aren't home but the majority we spoke to didn't. Additionally, despite there being over 40,000 PUDO points across the UK the majority of these can only be accessed by a single delivery company which limits their benefits for both drivers and consumers.

3 in 5

consumers are in favour of parcels being delivered to a PUDO if they can't be delivered to their home

1 in 6

consumers say they'd order more online if they were able to have parcels delivered to a safe location near home

Consumer behaviour can add to the pressure drivers feel

Successful delivery requires the consumer to be at home and able to open the door for the delivery driver. But working patterns, disability, and caring responsibilities can all have an impact on a consumer's ability to be at home and available to open the door when a driver arrives.



Kyle had a parcel delivered and the driver asked him to open the door so he could take a photo. Kyle is severely disabled and was unable to come to the door. He told the driver that he was welcome to leave the parcel at the door but this was refused. The driver did not give Kyle a tracking number so he was unable to arrange a re-delivery.

- Citizens Advice consumer service case study, February 2021

Many consumers don't have flexibility over their working timetable so can't be at home even if given a precise delivery slot. 1 in 6 consumers (16%) who missed a parcel said they weren't at home for an unavoidable reason, such as work or caring responsibilities and. This rose to 1 in 5 consumers (22%) with children.²¹

Consumer behaviour therefore has a significant impact on drivers' ability to deliver parcels, and to the pressure they feel, not knowing whether someone is home or able to come to the door.



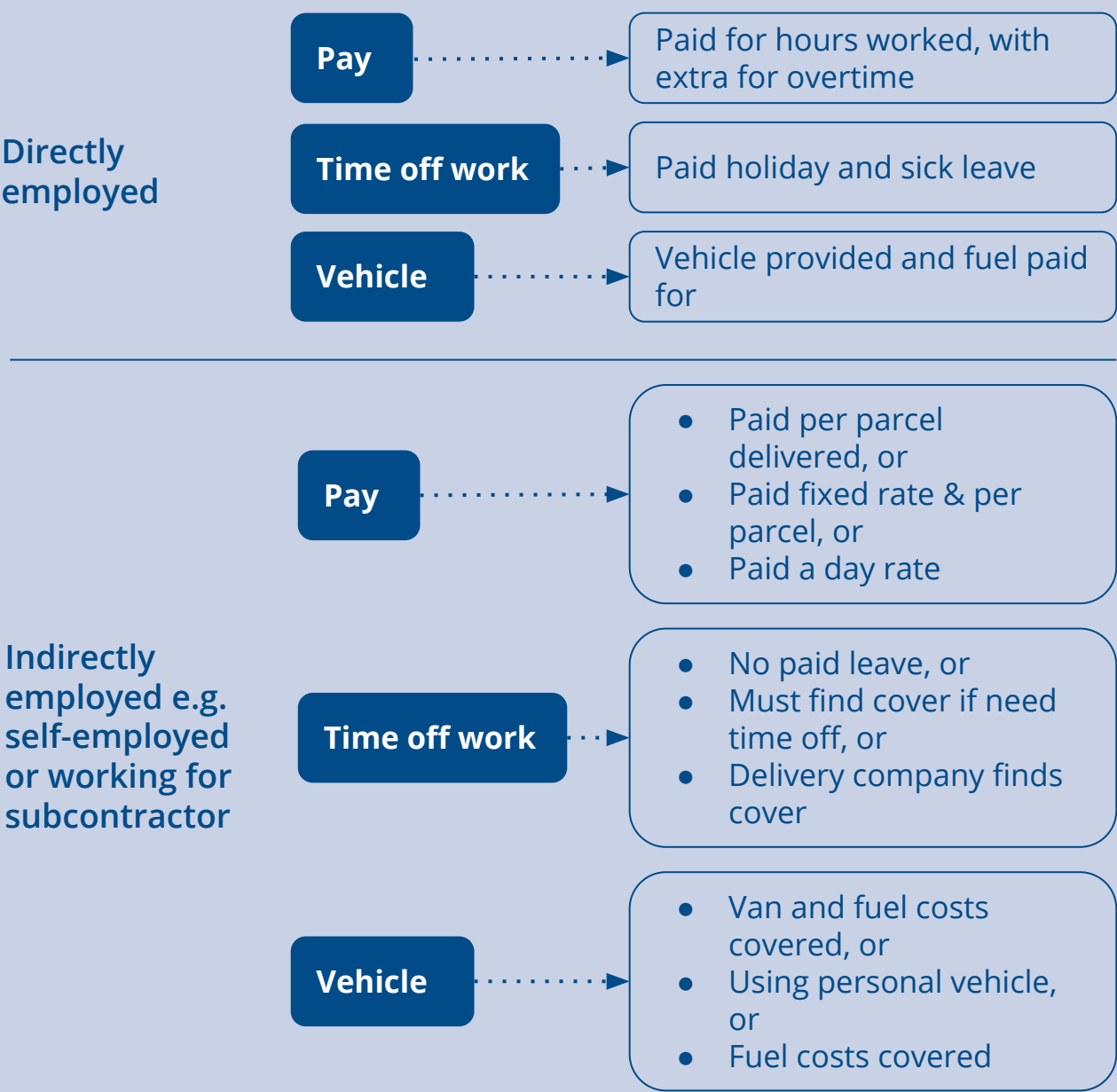
"I had a delivery the other day that the driver on the previous day hadn't been able to deliver. I HAD to deliver it that day. I tried a few times and was on the phone to my manager saying that they wouldn't answer the door, but he was saying he had just been on the phone to them and they were home. In the end they did come down but they had their headphones on playing a computer game and hadn't heard me."

This unpredictability can also encourage drivers to employ sub-optimal practices to get through their rounds. For drivers paid per successful delivery this can mean leaving the parcel in an insecure location, whilst for drivers paid per shift this can mean taking the parcel back the depot without waiting to see if the consumer is available or trying a neighbour.

Some employment contracts increase the pressure drivers feel

We found that the working conditions of delivery drivers vary between companies, within companies and even within individual depots. As this diagram shows, there are variations in how they are paid, whether their expenses are covered and whether they can have time off work. These varying factors can increase the pressure they feel because:

- The rate of pay for the hours worked can vary, often because of factors outside of drivers' control, such as whether the consumer is at home to accept the parcel
- Drivers with no leave entitlement lose pay when they take time off, and can be let go if they don't find someone to cover their shift which encourages the use of informal subcontracting
- Running costs for their vehicle vary according to the day's work



Variable rates of pay increase pressure

When drivers are paid by the day, or by successful delivery, their pay is susceptible to change and doesn't always bear relation to the number of hours they work. For drivers who cover their own van and fuel costs, there is even more pressure. Traffic, taking a wrong turn and having to drive back to the depot at the end of the day can all lead to a smaller pay packet.



Drivers we spoke to said:

- *"If you are late out, you are gonna finish later. Don't get paid for extra hours. Probably once a week this sort of thing happens."*
- *"The uncertainty is worrying when you don't know week to week what hours you will get and how you're going to pay the bills...I could be travelling or stuck in traffic for 1 and a half hours. I don't get paid for that."*
- *"There's no consistency, no guarantee week to week. You don't know what money you'll make which is a worry for paying bills."*

Taking time off results in lower earnings for drivers without paid leave, and some drivers are required to find cover for their routes if they do. Drivers worry that turning down shifts means they won't be offered them in future, and some feel bullied into taking shifts, worried that they'll be fired if they don't.



"You're always worried that they might turn against you if you turn down a shift."

Throughout our research we heard of drivers becoming informal subcontractors, working a number of routes and enlisting other drivers to work them. This may be a good workaround to the lack of security that these contracts provide, but has worrying implications for those working for an informal subcontractor. With no contract they are left even more vulnerable to exploitation. Advisers in our local advice centres have seen cases of drivers employing people on a casual basis, but firing them and refusing to pay for work previously completed if they take a day off.

In addition, with these arrangements in place there is a lack of accountability for consumers' parcels, as delivery companies don't know who is delivering their mail.

4. Regulation can improve outcomes for consumers and drivers

Competition works best when it's driven by choice, incentivising businesses to act in the interests of consumers by driving down prices and fuelling innovation and efficiency. But in the parcels market contracts are between parcel companies and retailers. Delivery companies are competing to win large retailer contracts rather than directly appeal to consumers.

This limits the amount of choice that consumers have. Only 21% of consumers are given information about which company is delivering their parcel ahead of delivery²² so they can't 'vote with their feet' if they don't like a particular delivery company.

Although the majority of parcels are delivered successfully, the fact that issues are so widespread appears to be reducing consumer expectation of the market. Our research shows that more than 1 in 5 (23%) consumers aren't confident that their deliveries will arrive on time, and 22% aren't confident that their deliveries will be left in a secure location.

Greater regulation can help to rebuild consumer trust in the market. It won't prevent parcel companies from going above and beyond to create an excellent consumer experience, but can act as a safety net to ensure consumers receive a consistent service no matter which company delivers their parcel.

Our recommendations:

1

Ofcom should explore using Essential Conditions to improve outcomes for consumers without increasing the pressure on delivery drivers.

2

Ofcom should consider how to encourage the creation of a network of local, open-access Pick Up Drop Off points.

3

The Government should consider widening the scope of the planned employment Single Enforcement Body.

Recommendation 1:

Ofcom should increase regulation in the parcels market to improve outcomes for consumers and delivery drivers

The parcels market is largely unregulated, with the only company facing significant regulation being Royal Mail, as Universal Service Provider. However, when just under 3 in every 5 (58%) of parcels are carried by other operators,²³ this situation is leaving consumers increasingly exposed to inconsistent service delivery across the market.

This lack of regulation means that:

- There is no formalised or consistent process for minimising the risk of parcel problems such as loss, theft, or damage,
- And, when problems do occur poor complaints processes make it difficult for consumers to access redress.

The regulator, Ofcom is currently reviewing their regulation of the postal market. And we're calling on them to use their powers to increase oversight of delivery companies and improve protections for consumers.

We're asking Ofcom to:

- **Explore the use of Essential Conditions to increase the safety and security of parcels, making it possible to fine companies who don't take suitable measures to keep parcels safe.**
- **Investigate how to extend both the scope and the content of the Consumer Protection Conditions to make it easier for consumers to access redress, no matter which company is delivering their parcel.**

These changes should help bring about end-to-end reform in the parcels market. Both by stopping problems from happening and by making it easier for consumers to put them right when they do.



Recommendation 2:

Ofcom should consider how to encourage the creation of a network of local, open-access Pick Up Drop Off points

Despite consumers receiving more parcels than ever, they still need to be at home and able to come to the door at a moments notice to receive them. This isn't always easy or possible, with around 40 million deliveries to consumers failing on their first delivery attempt.²⁴

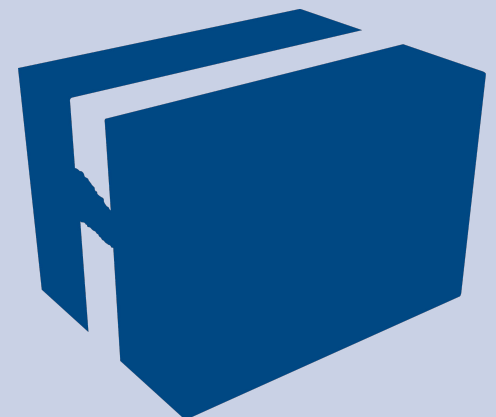
For drivers, this uncertainty over consumer behaviour can mean extended hours waiting for consumers to come to the door, or losing pay for undelivered parcels. Both of which indirectly incentivise drivers to leave parcels in insecure locations.

This issue could be minimised from both a consumer and driver perspective through the increased use of Pick up Drop Off points like parcel lockers and convenience stores, as an alternative delivery location for failed first-time deliveries.

Opening up the UK's PUDO network so that it can be used by all carriers could truly revolutionise parcel delivery and remove the stress and worry of unsuccessful deliveries from both consumers and drivers.

A local, open-access PUDO network would:

- Allow delivery drivers to successfully deliver a greater number of parcels first time, increasing productivity and reducing work related pressure
- Address concerns around the security of mail by reducing the incentive to leave parcels in insecure locations or keep them in private vehicles overnight
- Reduce the transport miles and emissions associated with delivering parcels and collecting undelivered items
- Increase consumer confidence as they know all parcels will be delivered on time, first time
- Allow consumers to pick up parcels at a time which suits them



Recommendation 3:

The Government should consider widening the scope of the Single Enforcement Body

Our research has demonstrated how delivery driver working conditions impact consumer outcomes in the parcels market. Drivers facing high targets and no pay for undelivered parcels can often feel forced to resort to sub-optimal practices such as leaving parcels in insecure locations or leaving before consumers get to the door.

A stable income, holiday and sick pay would help reduce the pressures drivers feel and lead to better outcomes for consumers. Without this, the problems are likely to persist.

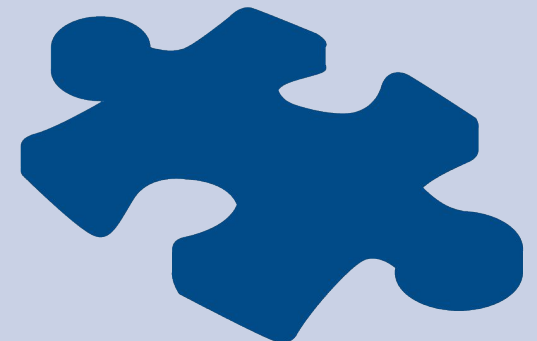
The Government has recently announced plans to set up an employment Single Enforcement Body to protect the rights of workers. We welcome this announcement and have called on it to be set up as quickly as possible.²⁵

However, we know that some of the most vulnerable workers can be wrongly classified.²⁶ And as it currently stands, they'd be excluded from the basic workers' rights the Single Enforcement Body would uphold, unless they go through a separate, lengthy tribunal process, currently subject to long delays.

Many delivery drivers are currently classified as self-employed, even though their conditions may in fact fulfil the criteria for worker status - for example having little control over the hours they work, or being subject to disciplinary action.

For these drivers, and the consumers they serve, the Single Enforcement Body will bring no improvements in reduction of pressure, and the negative outcomes associated with that pressure, if it can't first assess their status.

Government should therefore push forward in creating the Single Enforcement Body on workers' rights and consider broadening its remit to include the power to determine worker status.



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2. CATI survey of 2,008 18+ UK adults, Yonder Data Solutions, 17 Feb - 28 Feb 2021.
3. Online survey of 6,001 18+ UK adults, ICM, June 2021
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